

NEWS RELEASE

**National Language Teachers' Association Joins
Commissioner of Official Languages in
Urging Governments to Strengthen Language Learning Programs**

Ottawa, June 2, 2008 – The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) welcomes the release of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages' 2007-2008 Annual Report and applauds Commissioner Graham Fraser for featuring key elements requiring attention by the federal government as it prepares for the next initiative to succeed the *Action Plan for Official Languages*.

Learning a second-language is important for the promotion of linguistic duality in Canada. All levels of government must place a strong emphasis on guaranteeing and expanding access to second-language education programs and addressing human resources challenges throughout the country. "More focus should be placed on preparatory training for second-language teaching staff, professional development, access to relevant resources and the need to raise the profile of French as a second-language in schools", states the report.

Given the shortage of qualified second-language teachers, CASLT President John Erskine joins the Commissioner in urging governments to improve training and professional development programs for these teachers. In the report, the Commissioner also encourages mobility between provinces and territories and the sharing of knowledge and skills, especially among French as a second-language educators. "It is important that there be more focused research in the area of second language instruction in order to strengthen language learning programs" says Erskine.

CASLT looks forward to continued dialogue with all stakeholders on finding opportunities further support linguistic duality in Canada.

Established in 1970, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) increases awareness, appreciation and understanding of the importance of second-language learning and teaching throughout Canada and promotes the advancement of professional excellence among language educators. Visit us at www.caslt.org!

For more information, please contact:

Nicole Thibault

Executive Director

Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT)

300-950 Gladstone Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario; K1Y 3E6

Phone: 613-727-0994 x3

Email: direct@caslt.org

Nathalie Landry

Communications Officer

Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT)

Phone: 613-727-0994 x2

Email: educ@caslt.org